The George Washington University Oral History Project
Interview with Gilbert Gude
Conducted on August 2, 2000 by Zachary Schrag

ZS: Okay. Let's get started. Zachary Schrag is interviewing Gilbert Gude. It is August 2, 2000, and we are at his home in Bethesda, Maryland. It's a little past 10:40 in the morning. To start off, I'd like to ask a little bit about your background and your initial involvement in politics. I know you were born in Washington, D.C., proper, and then you grew up there or on this side of the line?

GG: Grew up out in Rockville. We had a farm/nursery between Rockville and Gaithersburg, and it was very rural.

ZS: And Gude Drive. Is that your family?

GG: Gude Drive goes right along the south side of the farm/nursey, or what was a farm/nursery.

ZS: So that was named after the farm?

GG: Yeah, that's named after us and family.

ZS: So how far back does your family go in Montgomery County?

GG: Well, my father moved out to Montgomery County in the 1920s. He was in family flower business. They really started over at Anacostia back in the 1800s taking vegetables into the market in the city of Washington and got into the flower business. My father got into the wholesale flower end, and then I always felt he wanted to be a country squire. So he bought this farm out in Rockville or past Rockville. We moved out there in the 1920s. So that's where I grew up.

ZS: You said that was just pretty much rural landscape.

GG: Oh, very rural. Rockville was only 1,500 people in those days. Montgomery County was a rural county. So I'm trying to think relative to the rural country. One of the reasons my father selected this particular tract of the particular farm was the fact that B&O Railroad; the mainline of the B&O ran right through it. He was thinking that the railroad was handy for shipping and so on. And indeed it was. In fact part of the deal of buying this farm was that put in a siding, which they did.

ZS: So you could, essentially, flag down a train.

GG: You could have freight come in and out, and they used to get shipments of a few bulk commodities by train. But it wasn't a big deal, just a little siding.

ZS: You stayed in this area pretty much. I know you went off to war at some point.

GG: Yeah. Well, when I got to high school, my mother said, you've got to go to a good school, now, a high school. So I came into Washington to Woodrow Wilson. Then when I started out at the University of Maryland and the war came along and after the war I ended up at Cornell and came back in the family business and then got into politics. My father was interested in politics and he really felt that people should be involved in the community in the political scene. But he was a very retiring person, really, and didn't want to run for office. So he never did.

So I got into precinct politics and one thing led to another and then I was appointed to the House of Delegates and then I ran for the House of Delegates. Montgomery County was very democratic in those days. When my father moved out there, someone in the community said, "Well, now if you really want to get anywhere, you've got to be a Democrat in Montgomery County." Actually, Republicans in those days had this aura of black Republicans. They used to refer to Republicans as − what was that? The old bit about the party of Lincoln.

ZS: Yeah.

GG: So in any case after my father was told he should register Democratic, he immediately went down and registered Republican. So when I first ran for the House of Delegates, I was the only Republican elected in all of Montgomery County. We had had some Republicans there in various offices. So then I decided that the party really needed some strengthening, and I ran for the State Central Committee. I was chairman of the State

Central Committee. That was from '58 to '62. It's the worst job in the world. Everybody complains in the party and nobody's happy with what the party is trying to do. In any case, then I ran for the State Senate. Maryland got a new congressional district, and I ran for that after being in the state senate for four years. That's sort of a garbled rundown.

ZS: So how were you able to win election as a Republican?

GG: Well, you have a lot of nice Democrats who are friends. I don't know. There is a reputation. They used to joke that the way a Republican could get elected to Congress because Montgomery County Democrats are so intelligent and intellectual that they did not want to vote a straight party ticket. They were always looking for somebody on the other side, so they can say, well I don't vote a straight party ticket. (Laughter.) So, indeed, you had to appeal to Democrats across the board and Republicans as well.

ZS: Now obviously from this farmland that you grew up into Montgomery County today, there's a huge development, and that's part of the story of Metro and vice versa. Were there any particular moments when you were really struck at how the county was changing?

GG: How the county was changing? Well, no we just knew there was tremendous growth going on. I don't know how to say it. We got interested or involved in planned planning because there was pressure. There were developers. There was a lot of construction

going on and issues in politics were what was going to happen in a vis-à-vis land planning, the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission, the Park and Planning Commission.

Early on when I was in the state legislature I got interested in stream valley parks and parkland development. A lot of the things I worked on involved planning. Land and planning and zoning and parkland development. I guess in one way I found that the people that were in the park and planning commission were so happy to have somebody who was really friendly to what was going on. There were quite a few Democrats at that time, of course, that were very interested in good land planning and strong zoning laws and so on. I was very friendly to that faction, and I used to work with them.

We used to joke. I'm trying to think of the name of the former councilman who retired. He was county executive for a while. He was very much into land planning, and he was one of the leaders in the Democratic Party. I'll think of his name. But we used to joke a little bit about him, that he was very much a leader in a civic association that was looking for stronger land planning laws and zoning laws and laws controlling the sanitary commission. There were a number of civic associations around the county. He used to say he was the leader of the interlocking flock and these people all worked together, you know, pushing for better zoning and planning laws. I rambled on there.

ZS: No, this is quite important actually for later chapters because, of course, Montgomery County still has much stronger planning laws then say Prince George's or certainly

Fairfax. And I'm trying to understand how those cultures emerged. So going back in the 1950s, there was this fairly strong lobby for strong land use laws. When the, I guess in 1961, the Wedges and Corridors plan came out. So that was pretty well supported?

GG: It was pretty well supported. Well, the more conservative groups, who I guess, represented builders and the like, were really not at all friendly to Wedges and Corridors. But these people who are very interested in planning were very supportive. I guess you, of course, see a liberal/conservative split there, I think. I've never analyzed it in regard to other issues, but I'm sure that's the case.

ZS: It seems that way that one side is more government-oriented. The other side more business-oriented.

GG: Yes.

ZS: Do you have a sense of why that would emerge in Montgomery County as opposed to other suburban counties? I'm particularly thinking in Fairfax where you never have that kind of support, that kind of planning lobby.

GG: Why did these kind of people settle in Montgomery County?

ZS: Right.

GG: That's a question, and I remember they had a seminar on Montgomery County history of politics, the historical society. You might want to get the tape of that seminar. They held it at the old Red Brick Courthouse. This was really spearheaded by the Democratic Party. They asked me to be on the panel. I said, you know, I'm the only Republican, they want me to be part of this. I was wondering what they were into. But it was really the Democratic Party was interested in writing a history of politics in the county. They thought this was the place to start.

At that time when I was on the panel, I was telling them about the attitude in the General Assembly when I was there. We had a bill providing for state support of kindergartens, which was looked on by some of the members of the legislature as sort of a communistic-hinged proposal, believe me. I remember there was this delegate from Baltimore, Sam Hopkins. I think he was part of the Hopkins family over there, and he was a Republican. He was the only Republican in the whole thirty-six member Baltimore City Delegation.

I remember I had this proposal on kindergartens, and I guess there were, well, I know there were other people in the delegation who supported it. But any case, he finally got up. There was this debate about the idea that the state should support kindergartens. He got up, and he had, sort of, a Lincolnesque drawl. He said now you've got to remember that Montgomery County is our experimental county. (Laughter.) Indeed that is sort of what you're talking about.

Why you had the people settle here as opposed to northern Virginia? I know back in the early days, we used to say that people who were conservatives when they moved into the Washington area were more inclined to settle in northern Virginia than over in Maryland. There's also a difference between Montgomery and Prince George's County. Quite a difference in ideology and attitude.

ZS: Is that just a question of money or I'm trying to understand?

GG: Money?

ZS: Well, Montgomery has been wealthier than Prince George's for a couple of centuries is my impression. But, of course, Fairfax is one of the wealthiest counties in the country, and it's quite conservative. So I don't quite understand.

GG: Well, I think that's in more recent years. Montgomery County was a big leader. I think if you go back in those days, it was way ahead of northern Virginia. How, how do you say that the more educated types settled in Montgomery County? Now that sounds snobbish, but there's certainly a difference there. Montgomery County in those days was touted and bragged on having the best school system. The best. Now a lot of that's lost. But in those days, Montgomery bragged on its educational system. But things have changed.

ZS: When does rapid transit first show up for you? I know that you were involved with the 1966 Compact Legislation, but had you been aware of transit planning before then?

GG: No, I don't remember when I first became aware of it. I remember that I felt we really had done the right thing. We provided that. There was this direct interlocking between the local government and the transit authority. What was it, the Montgomery County Transit Authority?

ZS: I know there was the Washington Suburban Transit Commission, which was Montgomery and Prince George's together.

GG: The members of the commission are appointed by the county council?

ZS: Right it goes in two counties to the one commission and then then they become the Maryland representatives and the authority is how it's set up.

GG: Exactly. I don't know whether it was just my thought. The thought I guess we had, we were in Annapolis, but look if it's going to work, it's got to come from the grass roots. It's got to come from the county up. If you try to have this governmental authority come from the top down, it isn't going to work. I think it's borne out by what happened. It worked.

ZS: And as long as that bottom-up direction was maintained, was there, was there much of a fight in the Maryland legislature over authorizing this compact? Do you recall?

GG: I don't recall. They probably said, oh, you know. That's just more of what you would expect from suburban Washington. No, I, I don't think. I don't remember any problem at all. There was one thing about that that − I'll think of it in a minute. But I'm trying to remember those days. That replaced − what was the previous agency?

ZS: Well, there was a federal agency, National Capital Transportation Agency.

GG: Yeah.

ZS: I talked to Judge Northrop who was involved before he was appointed to the bench, he was in the state senate. He said that his group was distrustful with having federal people in charge of rapid transit.

GG: Yeah, the same thing that I was saying. We felt we'd had something that came from the bottom up, and it would work.

ZS: So that was the big selling point in Annapolis?

GG: Oh, I know what. I'm sure you ran into when they were planning the line out Georgia Avenue that went into, what's that area over there?

ZS: Wheaton and the Glenmont Line.

GG: It was the Glenmont line, and the people out there did not like the location of the line. I was in Congress then. They came down, and said, look, you've always been interested in transit, and this is terrible. They're running the line in the wrong place. We thought, oh, my God, they're really going to get us in a corner here. We've got to do something about this line. The citizens seem to think it's in the wrong place. But we just looked at it for a few minutes and said, this is a decision of the local people. Now for Congress to be coming down, coming down from the top is all wrong. We said we're sorry. They were disappointed, but there was no rejoinder, because that was right. The mechanism for approving this was firmly rooted in the grass roots.

ZS: Absolutely.

GG: I don't know whether any of that, if that appeared in any of the research you've done.

ZS: Yeah, well I'm actually getting into that. There are protests in the mid-1970s in the Glenmont Line, some up on the Rockville Line, like on the Medical Center Station. There was a lot of debate over where that station would go.

GG: Yeah.

ZS: Get over into Prince George's around Chillum area, a lot of protests. In D.C., there were protests. As soon as they start building it, people would say, "You want to put in a thousand-car parking lot?" It's a very tricky question. The democracy is, some people are in fact, going to have a nuisance in their back yard for the benefit of the greater community.

GG: Well, yeah.

ZS: So that's of the things that makes it so interesting.

GG: Nobody told them that that's what was going to happen.

ZS: Well, or they did and they weren't paying any attention.

GG: They were all for transit. They were all for the airport until they put the airport right next to them, huh?

ZS: Exactly. So that's very much part of the story that I'm trying to get into. In the 1960s, then, in Annapolis, I guess I'm trying to get a sense of whether the two suburban counties were, indeed, seen as something very far away. I've heard some comments that the Maryland legislature was much more oriented toward Baltimore and didn't pay that much attention to the Washington area. Would that be fair?

GG: You mean that that was the reason that the transit approval went along without the rest of the legislature being concerned?

ZS: Yeah.

GG: No, I don't remember. I'm sure if there had been some opposition to that transit, you know, setting up the mechanism, I would remember it, it seems to me. It could have been in the newspapers.

ZS: So a couple of names I'd like to throw at you from this '50s and '60s period from Montgomery County. One is Darwin Stolzenbach who became the administrator.

GG: He's the federal administrator.

ZS: Right, and prior to that he had been active in Montgomery County. He ran for Congress in '58, I think, and later was involved in a bunch of civic organizations. Did you have any dealings with him?

GG: No, I don't remember if we had dealings with him.

ZS: What about Fritz Gutheim?

GG: Not on the transit thing. I knew Fritz and worked with him on various things. I don't ever remember anything vis-à-vis transit. Was he involved in the transit?

ZS: Yeah, he was, but very much behind the scenes. That is, je was on the advisory board of the federal agency. I think he actually posed a compact in that the federal types have their own worries about handing it over to the suburbs.

GG: He entered a state compact?

ZS: Yeah. I mean there were some D.C. activists who thought that having Maryland and Virginia would be a two against one vote against D.C. and were afraid that it would be a surrender of the suburbs. And then there were others who just felt that it was federal money and should be planned by the feds. We can get into later. I mean it includes Basil Whitener for example whom you later served with.

GG: Jumping way ahead, I don't know whether you ran, was back when we were arguing over the airport. Off and on, you have difficulty in Montgomery County. Well, you have difficulty all around the metropolitan area with the jets and the noise. Nobody seemed to like the idea, I proposed, I think the *Star* had an editorial saying it was a bad idea. But the airports be brought into the same compact with the transit compact. I included BWI and nobody liked the idea. It was the same idea that look, an interstate compact if we're going to have people talked about metropolitan government and why don't we do this with the metro government and do that? I said if we ever get to being, get a metropolitan

government, it's going to be, sort of the camel with its nose under the tent. We'll do it with adding on to an interstate compact, various functions of government. That's the way to do it, because that's grass roots again.

ZS: So was that your hope in 1966 when the transit compact went through that this would later grow?

GG: No, I don't think I ever thought about that in those terms. There wasn't the concern about this agency being bad news that was seen that way by the rest of the state. The state legislature or people in Montgomery County. I don't know. It would be interesting to know what the attitude of the people, did they do any polling at the time about building a subway system?

ZS: I don't know, in 1968 you have bond referenda in various counties, and those passed very well, so that's the most official number.

GG: Was this on a bond referendum for transit?

ZS: Yes, and that passed. That was in, I guess, Arlington, Fairfax, Montgomery, and Prince George's.

GG: Each one had a −

ZS: Each one had a separate one, all in 1968. I don't think that included the three Virginia cities and of course, it's just pretend no voting at all. But of those four counties that voted, it was in 74 to 80 percent range of approval.

GG: Yeah, about the same for all of them.

ZS: Yeah, slight variations. So that's the most official poll. And then there were public opinion polls done in D.C. about the same time. I don't know if anything was done in 1966 when the compact was first passed. But my impression is that it went through both Maryland and Virginia legislatures fairly easily, in part because it had been so stripped down. That is, instead of having this idea of a big regional government, they narrowed it down to just the compact and the authority had a lot of limits put on it. It couldn't buy excess land, for example. Couldn't buy a lot of land around the transit stops beyond what it needed to build. So they made it as non-controversial as possible so that it would get through the state legislatures and Congress fairly easily, and it worked.

GG: Yeah.

ZS: One other name, just to see if it rings bell is Donald Gingery of Montgomery County. Did you deal with him at all in the '50s?

GG: I knew Don. Is Don still alive?

ZS: I don't know.

GG: I wonder. Wasn't he, sort of, the nemesis of the planners?

ZS: Yeah.

GG: He was dangerous in the eyes of the − he was a developer.

ZS: A developer and very pro highway as I understand it.

GG: Yeah, right, but I don't remember any clash or any problem.

ZS: Okay, so no particular stories about him?

GG: No.

ZS: Okay, I think I want to move on to your time in Congress. Because you get elected in 1966. Is that correct?

GG: Yes.

ZS: Now, you got assigned to the House District Committee. How did that happen? Did you ask for that assignment?

GG: Oh, I wanted that, and it worked out beautifully. I don't remember that transit was particularly one of the reasons that we thought was good idea, but just in general we thought it was a necessity. I say we, I say the people that had a kitchen cabinet, and we used to talk about what's a good idea, what's a bad idea?

ZS: So you and your staff you mean?

GG: Yeah. Not staff, but people that supported me in the community. Not my staff on the Hill. I'm trying to think of the D.C. Committee. There were several things about Lyndon Johnson. The poverty program was really a cities' program and Lyndon Johnson, of course, was pushing both. He was going to carry on a war in Vietnam, and he was going to have a great poverty program. That was his downfall. Looking back on it, you can't believe that this happened. But this tremendous debt he was building. Running a war in Vietnam and also carrying on this poverty program. But the poverty program was an inner city program, essentially, at least in our eyes. We certainly knew that the rural areas were involved also.

But it gave me as far as I was concerned, a leg up in the kind of problems I was interested in anyway. So you could play what Johnson was doing. I don't know how to say it. What he was trying to do country-wide also applied to the D.C. and the health of the District of Columbia. The health of the economy and the city related to Montgomery County and I don't know how to explain it. But it was the right place to be. I was

certainly supporting the poverty program of the administration, and I was in the D.C. Committee, and we were looking at the problems of the city there. I say, we, I was looking at the problems of the city.

You'll probably run across some clippings that take tours of programs that were being carried on in the city drug programs. We went out with the police, in the patrol cars at night and looking at crime firsthand. It just dovetailed with what I was interested in. Of course, Metro sort of fell into this whole matrix of things. I'm trying to think of examples of how this all worked together so well. Oh, Johnson, also took − and I'll get back to this other thing, it became evident to the administration to the extent that they had staff people that were concerned about the District of Columbia that I was very friendly to the kind of things that they were interested in in the city. Johnson wanted to strengthen, help the District of Columbia, help the D.C. government. So one of the proposals he put forth was to try to make the city government as democratic as possible. You've run into the real organization plans.

ZS: Yeah, you know Joe Califano has a memoir of his time in the White House, and he gives a chapter to that, which is very helpful.

GG: He does?

ZS: Yeah.

GG: Yeah, well, I was also a member of the Government Operations Committee and executive orders of the type that the president put forth for the D.C. government are referred to Government Operations Committee. A familiar executive order is referred to Congress and unless it's − not turned down. I can't think of the name for it. Unless Congress votes it down in sixty days, then the executive order takes place. Well, the executive order was to abolish the three commissioners and provide for an elective council and mayor. It just fit into the law.

Congress wasn't very happy with that idea, or I would say some members of Congress weren't very happy with that idea. I'm trying to think. Anyway I was on the Government Operations Committee, and I thought this was a great idea, and so I went in and testified in support of the executive order before the Government Operations Committee of which I was a member. I remember Henry Reuss was on there. I don't know whether you've run into him from Wisconsin. I got to know Henry pretty well. He was so surprised. Here was a Republican in here supporting the president's executive order to give democracy to the city government to the extent that you could give democracy, have an elected council.

ZS: Well, no this was before that.

GG: City government didn't have any more authority, but they had an elected council and an elected mayor.

ZS: Well, no, this was the appointed council at that point, right?

GG: I think it was − well, you mean the commissioners?

ZS: No. As it goes through, I might have the dates wrong. As it goes through, the mayor and the council are appointed from ’67 to ’74. It’s not until 1974 that you have elections. I mean it’s still a big improvement.

GG: Yeah, well see, my memory doesn’t serve me right. I thought it was elected. But anyway the idea of a council and a mayor was an improvement over the commission form of government. I was just all involved in ideas to strengthen the D.C. government. I was pointing out, I remember one time I made a study of the various boards and committees they had in the city. For example, there were several boards that I got my staff to do a study of who were the people that were appointed on these various boards for the city.

I showed how these boards for the most part represented the more affluent areas of the city. The appointing authority was not fairly distributing the appointees over the whole city. Well, *The Washington Post* in particular liked what I was doing. They thought this was great. I was showing that this city government really wasn’t responsive to the people and so on and so forth. The White House liked it, and we were talking about what we could do to strengthen D.C. government. There was a White House aide by the name of Barefoot Sanders. Did you run into that?

ZS: Yeah, I've run into that name.

GG: Yeah, Barefoot Sanders. He was on the White House staff, and gosh he was a regular visitor to our office. We were saying now the president should do this in regard to various plans he had for the city and do that. So we got to know Fishbait Sanders. I think he subsequently became a federal judge. We used to go over to meetings at the White House. As I remember it was, sort of like, there was a shuttle bus that we'd have, so we'd go over to the White House on several different occasions. Lyndon Johnson was very friendly to people that were friendly to him. I mean, it was a backscratching process. It was, sort of funny, when Nixon was elected, it was like an iron curtain went down between the White House and us as far as we were concerned.

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Well, I haven't given you very much in a coherent order, except the idea of transit fits into this. At the same time, I was pushing what I called the balanced transportation system, and I'm sure you've seen that in some of the statements and releases we put out. We said you've got to have both. You know, we have to have highways and subways and a balanced system. Of course, the opposition to highways was that the highway builders are coming in to the city and they're going to crush their way through the most poverty stricken areas. They're going to divide the city.

I think you run into that in editorials and speeches and so on that there's going to be this transportation corridor down through the city that's going to be like a Great Wall of

China. I remember all of this, and of course, the Three Sisters Bridge. They loved the debate about that. The Three Sisters Bridge was going to destroy the Potomac Rivers, the scenic and environmental qualities. I'm sure you've run into this.

ZS: Right.

GG: That was all part of our interest into what was happening in the city. It worked out perfectly as I said, to the point I had some constituents, conservative constituents, who complained, that you know, Gude's interested in the city. I remember we were over on MacArthur Boulevard and the Corps of Engineers was complaining about what was happening to their aqueduct that comes down under MacArthur Boulevard. Are you familiar with that?

ZS: Right, what used to be Conduit Road or something?

GG: Yeah, it used to be Conduit Road. So we went over there one day with some people with the Corps who were so glad to have somebody who was interested in what they were doing. This was out in Maryland. They had the water out of the aqueduct and so somehow we were privy to this and the Corps was glad to take us down into the empty aqueduct. They were cleaning it or doing some repairs. So we were in there with the big ruler measuring it.

The Post was taking pictures of all of this. There was something in the paper about it. Then we got this letter from a constituent. It says, "Well there you are again down in the sewers of Washington, more concerned about what's happening in the city, than what's happening out in Montgomery County." We took the position that the health of the city was important to the health of the suburbs, and it should be thought of as one unit.

Well, of course, along with this, and this doesn't have anything to do in particular with the transit. We were opposed to a commuter tax, which is considered death on wheels for a suburban member of Congress, regardless of whether he's liberal or conservative. If you're for a commuter tax, forget it. But we did say that it was very important to be on the D.C. Committee and working on problems of the city because they were important to Montgomery County. They were important to the whole metropolitan area.

I remember something happened down in Georgetown. I don't know whether they thought they were going to have a big demonstration and they closed off the streets of Georgetown and the merchants were very upset because of this. I don't know if you've run into this. I forget when it happened. But anyway I was down there and so I was going around talking to people that were on the street and went in to several shops and several businesses.

I don't know whether it was a reporter with me or not, but in any case the first three or four people that I ran into at the time of this crisis down in Georgetown, it turned out they were all Montgomery County citizens who had businesses down in Georgetown, and it

was beautiful. I said look, you know, if somebody doesn't take an interest in what's going on the city, what's going to happen to these poor businessmen from Montgomery County? Their investment is in the city, and we've got to look out for the health of the city. So it would all seem very obvious, what I'm saying is the transit was all part of it.

ZS: Oh, absolutely. It seems that you have almost two constituencies there. That is you have the people who elected you here in Montgomery County, and then you have the voteless masses of D.C., but you believe there wasn't a conflict between the two. That is, you could serve them both.

GG: Oh, I thought there was no problem, and I kept getting reelected, and I figured, well I must be doing something right or if this is wrong, the other things I'm doing are overcoming the negative aspects. I was increasing my margin each time when I ran.

ZS: Did you feel, as a member of the District Committee, and also how did other members feel that you had responsibility to respond to the wishes of the people of the District? It's a little hard for me even today, when we have partial home rule to even understand where these members of Congress from North Carolina or today Oklahoma, how they can live with themselves setting policy for people who didn't elect them.

GG: Well, it's a plantation. (Laughter.) You've run into that, haven't you?

ZS: Absolutely, but I'm trying to understand how you could reconcile that? I mean, obviously, you were doing what you could with the council to improve the situation a bit.

GG: Really, the attitude − I don't know where it came from. You obviously had conservative leadership in Congress that tolerated the D.C. Committee, which was being led by McMillan, I can't think of the names of the other.

ZS: Whitener is the one who −

GG: Whitener.

ZS: Tell me some stories about Whitener, because he's very important.

GG: Well, they were really impossible, and I remember joking with Gordon Hawk my administrative assistant. I'd say, gee I'd go down and I'm getting ready to go home and I pull out of the garage and there I see across the street, I see a policeman with a police dog patrolling the area. You know the reason that the police are patrolling this area so well, they want to make sure the leadership in Congress, particularly the D.C. Committee sees that they're taking of things. They've got the dog, and they're keeping things straight in the city. Of course, crime was big. What is it? Nixon ran on, was it −

ZS: Law and order?

GG: Wasn't it that the District of Columbia was Crime Capital, USA. Have you run into anything like that?

ZS: No, I haven't.

GG: You know the crime rate was very high, and I remember we increased the number of police by a large number. This was a national thing. But D.C. was part of it, crime infested. Anyway the D.C. Committee, like when I got on it, the committees did not have names. Have you run into that?

ZS: Yeah, subcommittee number four.

GG: Yeah, they were one, two, three, four. Really my work on the D.C. Committee dovetailed in with the Democratic side. There were three or four members that were on the Democratic side who were bound and determined they were going to do something to turn the D.C. Committee around.

ZS: What do you mean turn it around?

GG: Well, they were going to get names for the D.C. Committee, subcommittees, and they were working on home rules.

ZS: So why weren't the subcommittees named?

GG: Well, because then the chairman didn't have to worry about where he'd refer − I mean he could refer a bill to any committee he wanted to. If the numbered subcommittees didn't correspond to any function. So the chairman could figure out which subcommittee was easiest to get the results he wanted on that particular piece of legislation.

ZS: That would serve to increase McMillan's power?

GG: Yes.

ZS: I see, that's something I never understood.

GG: Yeah, right.

ZS: I don't think it's written down anywhere, in fact.

GG: Despite the fact that every other committee in Congress is organized according to what function or what do you say, but not the D.C. Committee.

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ZS: Right, and of course the Senate D.C. Committee had regular names as I recall.

GG: Yeah. We had a ball.

ZS: Was there a split between − regardless of party lines, you have on the D.C. Committee, you have some locals, you and Broyhill? Were there other suburban congressmen on the D.C. Committee?

GG: Did Larry Hogan? I don't think he got on the D.C. Committee.

JG: You're about to be alone.

GG: My wife, Jane.

JG: How are you? Nice to meet you.

ZS: Hi. Nice to meet you.

JG: You have a telephone message here.

ZS: I can put this on pause for a second. So you have a couple of suburban members on the D.C. Committee, and then you've got these southerners.

GG: Well, Broyhill was exactly the opposite. You know everything Broyhill stood for, I didn't stand for and vice-a-versa. That's all there was to it.

ZS: What were some of the biggest differences between you two? Obviously transportation is one.

GG: Oh, you know, he is violently opposed to the poverty program, and he was appealing to − he had a constituency that − well, finally he was defeated. Now I don't know what the story was on that. I don't think it was because of his stand on poverty issues or Great Society programs. I think it was his constituency was changing. I think he was eventually defeated.

ZS: That was part of it. I think, also, from the press I've read, he was at least damaged by issues of corruption. Not illegal, necessarily, but he had made a lot of money on real estate, in part, that had been helped by his bills, and this was the '74 Watergate election. Anyone who had grown rich in office in that election was going to be in big trouble. So, I think, that's what did him in. Obviously, you can spin it any way you want.

GG: I don't think it was, as I said, his feeling about the metropolitan area.

ZS: No, because he survived in '70 and '72 just fine.

GG: I remember we were debating the poverty program. Mac Mathias and Henry Reuss. Henry Reuss was on the Government Operations Committee and subcommittee chairman. I was on his subcommittee. Mac Mathias and Henry Reuss, and I believe

what happened, they put an amendment on the Great and the Poverty program, providing for more money for rat control programs. Rats, big problem in poor, poverty stricken areas and the housing and so on. I think there'd been a lot of publicity about this. So they had an amendment and Joel Broyhill and some of his like-minded friends got up and they started making fun of this amendment. They said, we've got to defeat this crazy amendment. They said, "Right on. Right on!" They were mimicking this on the floor of the House. I don't know whether that got into the newspapers or not. It has nothing to do with transportation.

ZS: Well, it does and it doesn't. Obviously, transportation fits into Johnson's urban program.

GG: Yeah.

ZS: I mean, he sets up HUD and then the Department of Transportation in '66, '67, so there's an idea that the federal government will be giving more money and trying to put some of the planning on more local basis so you don't have these freeways breeze through.

GG: I must say that you can't make this thing black and white, because there were, I'm sure we had conservatives supporting the mass transit and the people realizing that this was a good thing. We did have an interstate compact structure that made sense. I'm trying to think. There was support across the board for the transit. Just as we felt the highways, well, let me get back to that. The highway program, in general, all across the country. At that time what was happening, the Interstate Highway program that started under

Eisenhower, and actually must have been in planning years before Eisenhower. It didn't just spring out of the Eisenhower administration. This idea of an Interstate Highway program had been cooking for some time.

The Interstate Highway System went along beautifully out in the rural, small town areas. It wasn't until it ran into these brick walls you might say, so to speak, in the metropolitan areas. Is this not the case that all of a sudden an Interstate Highway Program that had been going along beautifully and was being constructed very rapidly, just ran into a brick wall when they got into metropolitan areas. That's what happened in the District of Columbia. When the highway program hit the District line, it was in trouble. I remember one of the first. There was a former Senator who was big leader in opposition to the highway program because it was going to go across the East-West Highway and go down Rock Creek Parkway. Did you run into this?

ZS: I'm trying to think who that would have been.

GG: There was a former senator who lived over there off of East-West Highway. He was opposing the Interstate Highway Program because it came down towards the District and then it swung over to Rock Creek Park. The highway planners decided, what is the path of easiest resistance to take? The Interstate Highway into the District would be down through the park. There are no people down there, and we could just run it right down Rock Creek Park. Only they were running close to this community over off of East-West Highway. This former U.S. senator was there, and he was the one who led the

opposition. I guess that was one of the first early opponents to the Interstate Highway System in the District.

ZS: Yeah, that sounds right. Then, I guess later, they might have moved it a bit because they were going to send it right through Cleveland Park, which is all lawyers and a few journalists thrown in.

GG: They're loaded for bear.

ZS: (Laughter.) So that hits around 1959 or so. Those people don't stop fighting until the 1970s. That was really stepping into a nest of snakes or something. So they keep on moving these proposals around. How they're going to get it from I-270 into the District and then I-95. One thing, of course, is that this new D.C. City Council, which you helped set up, one of its first actions is to the say we don't want the Three Sisters Bridge coming in from Virginia. We don't want the North Central coming in from Maryland. Kluczynski from Illinois amends the Highway Act to say that the District of Columbia has to build these highways, and you support that amendment.

GG: Who is this?

ZS: John Kluczynski. I don't quite understand, given that you were supporting the District in its efforts to get more self-government, why you then turn around and say, this council that I set up, Congress is now going to dictate which highways you're going to build.

GG: I don't know what my rationale was at the time, except I said you've got to have highways despite the fact that after all this is so these suburbanites can get into the city.

ZS: So when push comes to shove, your Montgomery County voters are going to have to come first. Is that fair?

GG: Yeah, a commuter tax. This is part of the same syndrome.

ZS: I see. So the commuter tax. Again, District of Columbia self-government is fine until −

GG: But no commuter tax.

ZS: Interesting.

GG: I don't know. It was a little bit like, I'm trying to think of the name of the fellow that became senator from the State of Washington who was on the D.C. Committee.

ZS: Brock Adams?

GG: Well I used to say there are those real liberals in Congress, but when they looked at my voting record, it was pretty damn liberal. It was one of the most liberal in the Republican Party. But Brock Adams was on the D.C. Committee, and he and the fellow who was

mayor of, was it Minneapolis and Wisconsin? I'm trying to think. Minneapolis, Minnesota. There was another member of the D.C. Committee. He was from Wisconsin, Fraser. Have you run into him?

ZS: Maybe.

GG: Fraser and Brock Adams, they purposely got on the D.C. Committee to try to straighten it out. I don't know, one of them was trying to get the chairman to name the committees. But Brock Adams, just to give you an example of where ideology really gets bad for members looking at his electorate back home and whether he's going to keep his seat. Brock Adams, when it came to the supersonic transit, is manufactured in his district, and he supported the supersonic plane, despite the fact that this ran counter to everything else in his ideology. But you know, he's got to get elected if he's going to come do good things in other areas. I think that's the way with commuter tax and the question of these highways that I felt was essential.

ZS: That's very helpful.

GG: So that's the way it is. Every now and then it breaks down. (Laughter.)

ZS: The other thing in that era of '67, '68 is some of the things you say come out quite partisan. That is, you're attacking the Democrats. The Johnson Administration and

Secretary Boyd in partisan terms. I wonder if I should take that with a grain of salt, too, given that you were working with the Democrats in a lot of cases.

GG: Well, I guess, our feeling was that all through the campaign when I first ran. I ran against Royce Hanson. I don't know whether you've run into any of my campaign statements and speeches.

ZS: Some things, yeah.

GG: There was one speech where I said, yes, my opponent Royce Hanson is for a balanced transportation system. He says he's for a balanced transportation system, and I know how he means balanced transportation system. He means balanced on two wheels on a subway. The inference was, he's really opposed to highways. I said we've got to have a balanced transportation system. Highways and transit.

ZS: The other area of course is the Three Sisters Bridge. Looking back on your record, that seems a little strange where you've done all these things for the Potomac River, and then all the other great Potomac River enthusiasts think the Three Sisters Bridge will be the end of it all. But you supported it. So was this also political necessity?

GG: I remember we used to belittle the Three Sisters Bridge, the idea that it was such a terrible thing. We said, one of those Three Sisters, you would think they were some tropical isle, some beautiful islands out in the Potomac. They're nothing but a bunch of

rocks. So that was our rationale. We didn't think that the bridge was such a terrible thing. Then, I guess, we got into the analogy that bridges bring people together. They tie communities together. What's so terrible about this particular bridge? So that was the way it was.

ZS: But you seem to have drawn the line at William Natcher and his blackmail. That it's one thing for the Congress to say to the D.C. Council, you must build these highways. It's another thing to say, we're going to withhold subway funds until you build the highways. Is that correct? Do you remember your relationship with Natcher?

GG: I'm trying to think about how we approached that. I was for releasing. I wanted him to release, and I forget whether we made speeches or what we did. We had to remember that besides these highway funds, that Natcher was a colleague in Congress. He's a very powerful colleague. He was chairman of the D.C. Appropriations Subcommittee, right?

ZS: Right.

GG: There are other things that Bill Natcher has control of, and if we try to get up and jump up and down on him and say mean things, here I'm a lower-grade congressman. I guess there was a certain sensitivity. You walk softly. Of course, we thought it was ever to the credit of Nixon that he was the one who finally got the funds released, or he got the money which broke ground for Metro.

ZS: Right, in ’69.

GG: Yeah, in ’69. We thought that was much to his credit that he broke the deadlock.

ZS: Now around that same time, so it’s hard to keep track of players. You’ve got Nixon leaning on Natcher. You’re getting some correspondence between you and Gilbert Hahn of the D.C. Council in which he’s very upset with you.

GG: For pushing the highways. Yeah.

ZS: Did you have a lot of dealings with the D.C. Council? You knew Gilbert Hahn personally?

GG: Gilbert Hahn had run for council out here in Montgomery County.

ZS: Oh, he had?

GG: Yeah. It’s rather interesting. This is an aside. It shows a changing complexion of the county, and what was going on. Gil Hahn is Jewish. He ran for the council. I forget whether there were other Jews had run at time and was defeated in the Montgomery County Council. He moved into the district and said a Jew can’t get elected to the council in Montgomery County. But he can in the District of Columbia, get elected to the council here. Subsequently, of course, now Jews are very much in the leadership or part

of the leadership in Montgomery County. That was very interesting. No, I knew Gil Hahn. We got along. We didn't agree on all issues. No, I was very friendly with some of the members of the D.C.. What is, the name Nevius?

ZS: Yeah.

GG: I remember when they had the riots and had a picture in one of my newsletters of walking with Jack Nevius through the smoke and bricks and everything it had on the front page of my newsletter. That's when the populous really got polarized. The people in Montgomery County when they had the riots, was it the Poor People's March? I forget which came first, and what happened. But the citizens just automatically fell into two categories. There were either the shoot the looters, they wanted a national guardsman on every corner in the District of Columbia.

And then there were the, we used to say the little old ladies who were in the churches making sandwiches for the poverty marches. People were either on one side or the other. There was no middle ground. Things finally settled down. They were rough times. They really were. But I think, at the time, I said, "Look, I don't know how we're going to get these highways into the District, but we can't just let all the automobiles pile up at the District line."

ZS: Now from what I understand happened, it starts out, there's all these highway protests in the district, and you're saying, "Look, we just need these highways to get my constituents to downtown."

GG: Yeah.

ZS: Then Takoma Park started saying, "Hey, they're going to build the North Central through Takoma Park. We don't want that."

GG: That's the North Central Freeway.

ZS: Then that spreads from Takoma Park and eventually the Montgomery Council says, "Let's delete the North Central Freeway." At that point you change your position in Congress to say, "Well, now that my constituents are anti-highway, too, I'm going to take on Natcher." Is that a fair chronology?

GG: Did I take a different position on Natcher or was it on the highway?

ZS: Well, that's the thing. There are these, sort of, two issues. But certainly, by 1971, you're saying highway planning should be up to the local jurisdiction, not by dictate of Congress, which is very different from what you were saying when it was D.C. at stake. But when it's Montgomery County that is now saying, we take away these highways,

take them off the Interstate System, your position changes. Again, it seems like it's for very pragmatic reasons. You're, in fact, speaking for your constituents.

GG: Yeah, I think the attitude − there was a change. There was a change.

ZS: Do you remember any of the tactics of the fight against Natcher? Because once you say, we don't want the North Central, it really becomes, and this is in 1971, the second Natcher delay. There's this year-long battle to get the subway funds released. The other thing is, of course, by 1971, Montgomery County has paid in a bunch of money into Metro that's going to disappear if Metro never gets built, so you obviously have much more urgent reasons than even in 1968 or '69 to get those funds released. But somehow it's Robert Giaimo of Connecticut who takes on Natcher, not any of the local politicians.

GG: Well, the local politicians for one thing, I think it's a matter of power. As I said, Natcher was important, besides transit money. Taking him on meant problems for local people, whereas Bob Giaimo, no problem for him.

ZS: Oh, I see. So Natcher couldn't retaliate against Giaimo.

GG: Well, and probably Natcher was getting pressure from other, I don't where to say, but there were a lot of pressures going on. But Bob Giaimo as a member, he was in a pretty powerful position that Natcher couldn't resist.

ZS: Well, but what ends up happening, of course, is that Natcher resists until the last bullet. That is, he is actually defeated on the floor of the House, which is relatively unusual for an appropriations subcommittee chairman. I'm trying to understand what happened to the House of Representatives in 1971 to get them mobilized against Natcher.

GG: Let me see. I had an answer to that. I think part of it is in Natcher's − you have to remember besides the issues involved in the question of mass transit and the fact that conservatives were going to him about building highways and you've got to hold. I think you've got to remember his personality and where he comes from. I don't know whether you followed any more of Natcher's career or knew what happened to him in the end. His closing days of Congress.

ZS: Oh, getting wheeled into Congress. That's the thing. He's such a strange man.

GG: Yeah, well I think that's part of it. I mean, here he's a committee chairman. This doesn't have anything directly to do with it, but he had a perfect record. What is it, voting and attendance?

ZS: Yep, 14,000 votes or something, 19,000?

GG: I don't know whether you've run into this, towards the end he missed a vote, and I don't know this worked. He got the House to accept or to register his vote that he had missed. This is, sort of, unheard of. I guess the leadership said, "Look, this poor guy is dying, so

we can go ahead and do something which is way out of line." It was out of line, but it wasn't anything substantively out of line. Then we he asked for it again, he missed another vote. Did you run into that?

ZS: I'm not quite sure of this.

GG: Yeah, he missed another vote. Leadership said, "Look, next thing we'll have people coming from all over." Good old Natcher, we love him and everything, but we're just going to have to turn him down. He's going to miss this vote.

ZS: He died the next day or something.

GG: The poor guy died. You have to feel sorry for him. Look at it from his viewpoint. You know, this is his life.

ZS: Yeah, but that's the challenge. It's his life, it's my city. I mean, this is, I'm trying to understand this whole Natcher thing because he was nuts. The thing that I conclude from this is he never missed the vote. When his wife was dying, he would fly back and forth between Bowling Green and Washington, leave her on her deathbed, so he could come back for procedural vote.

GG: I didn't know about that one.

ZS: He memorized *Robert's Rules of Order*. Do you know about his middle name? His name was William Houston Natcher. When he was in first grade, his teacher asked him he spelled that, and he spelled it, Huston, leaving out the "o" in Houston. After that, it got on some certificate, and he spelled it the same way for the rest of his life because he didn't want to change his mind. He was just incapable of changing his mind. That's to me the explanation of the whole subway thing. He didn't have, as far as I know, any really dog in that fight. He wasn't taking freeway money. He wasn't taking anyone's money.

GG: No, I don't think he was corrupt. Somehow this was an important record he was making in Congress. It was to the credit of the family name.

ZS: Did you have any personal dealings with him?

GG: Oh, no. I don't recall whether we asked for some particular things from him. We treated him very gingerly. A lot of people treated him very gingerly.

ZS: The challenge would have had to have come from his own committee, then. From someone like Giaimo. That is the House Committee was not going to take him on. Is that fair to say?

GG: Well, the House District Committee − you mean as far as transit was concerned?

ZS: Yeah.

GG: As far as the money was concerned? Well, the House, I don't know quite at that time, what the makeup of the House District Committee was. The House District Committee wasn't pushing for him to release the money as a committee, or the majority. I think mostly, McMillan and Whitener and company, you know, they said, well you know, we ought to build that damn freeway, and Natcher's doing the right thing.

ZS: Got it.

GG: Right on. Right on. (Laughter.) You know where Broyhill was in all this.

ZS: Right, except at the last minute. I mean that's the thing. Once Giaimo −

GG: Did he switch?

ZS: Everyone switched. I don't know. I wrote to Giaimo. I haven't heard back from him. I don't know. I think he's still in Arlington, but you haven't had any contact with him?

GG: No.

ZS: His papers are up at the University of Connecticut. I don't understand. For me in the story, he's like this white knight who rides in from some distance land and just shows up

and slays the dragon or something. It's really bizarre. I don't understand why he took such a political risk. So it's all quite dramatic and somewhat mysterious.

GG: I don't know. My administrative assistant might. He probably would remember some of these things much better than I. I'd forgotten all about Giaimo.

ZS: Yeah, but anyway, you signed on, I think, in early '71 and Broyhill, right at the last minute, sort of signs on as well after supporting Natcher for years. So at the end, Natcher was defeated. The other area that you show you up is with the bus takeover. The original compact was for rapid transit only. Then starting in 1970 or so, you start sponsoring legislation to allow them to do buses as well. Eventually in 1973, Metro takes over the buses. Do you remember any background of that? Were your constituents demanding that something be done about D.C. Transit System?

GG: I am trying to remember, as far as the transit system was concerned, we weren't happy with it. Did we have any votes? What was the −

ZS: I mean, eventually in 1972, there was a vote, and I don't think there was too much controversy. I think, perhaps, I mean originally, in '66, '67, the idea was buses are a private company, they should remain private. Then they just fell apart so quickly, financially that by the time they were about to go bankrupt, there was relatively little controversy about public operation. That's my impression anyway.

GG: I don't remember.

ZS: It may have just been a non-controversial thing.

GG: I remember that we felt the bus system was poorly managed. There again, I guess, it was more the person who was operating it. The villain around town − the villain of the piece, and I think he used to say it, O. Roy Chalk said, "You know, I'm just a scapegoat, anything that goes wrong." It's O. Roy Chalk's fault and so on and so forth. I think maybe we thought, oh that was about right and just got a bad fellow running it. But that was a side issue to the question of getting Metro going.

ZS: Right.

GG: I don't remember any of the goings and comings on the transit system.

ZS: Fair enough. It may have just been non-controversial as to not take up much of your time. I haven't found any real knock-down debates over − there were not too many alternatives, with the thing going bankrupt. Actually, after 1971, after the defeat of Natcher, it's noticeable that in your papers at GW, there's much less attention to Metro that is as you said, when people came to you complaining about where their route was going to go, you said this is a local issue. This is no longer a congressional matter. Is that pretty much fair?

GG: Well, we said to them, when you all wanted Metro built, it should be. Or no, I think what we were saying is that the ideology in Montgomery County is home rule and local control and that's exactly what you've got for Metro and that's the way it should continue. They couldn't argue with it. They didn't like it. But they certainly couldn't attack us on it. It was the right thing to do as they say.

ZS: As I understand it, you left Congress in '76.

GG: Yeah.

ZS: As I understand it, the funding for Metro didn't really become − there were always funding problems, but in the early '70s, they were canceling all these freeways and putting the money into Metro, so they didn't need another block grant from Congress per se. It wasn't until 1979, 1980 that they passed the next big Metro financing. So you were probably fairly hands off with that as well. I guess my question is, after 1971, do you recall being involved in Metro very much or was it a local issue?

GG: No, once it got this construction started, there weren't any big problems. Then, of course, it was a question of they were tearing up the city. The merchants were all upset. They're putting them out of business. But that's the way it was.

ZS: Right, I have some documents of your going downtown and taking the tour of D Street all torn up or something.

GG: Oh, yeah.

ZS: But what are you going to do except keep building?

GG: Yeah. I forget whether we proposed any ideas of what could be done, but it was off the ground. Metro was on the way. They'll keep building. I think that's one thing that Joe Broyhill and I got together on building an extension out to Dulles and make a study.

ZS: Well, they're still studying.

GG: They're still studying, but Metro will continue to go. Joe Broyhill, is he still alive?

ZS: I don't think so. I'm not sure, but I don't think so.

GG: I forget, though. What was the position of the − I forget where Mac Mathias weighed in on the highways. Did you run into −

ZS: I think. I'm not sure. I have some notes, but my impression is that this was always a House issue. That is that the Senate District Committee, for example, as I understand it, generally deferred to the House District Committee. Certainly on the highway issues, it was always the House. First, you had Kluczynski saying, you must build the Three Sisters Bridge, whereas the Senate version didn't. The Kluczynski amendment made it

into the conference bill. Then with Natcher, you have the same thing. So it's always the House of Representatives that was the real battleground. So I'm not sure what Mathias's position was, but my impression is that it didn't matter all that much because it wasn't the Senate fight.

GG: Yeah.

ZS: So I can look that up. Broyhill was always very pro-freeway. They had their own freeway fight out on I-66, until he was eventually booted out with Watergate. But it is deafening how, as you say, it was not a black and white issue. These things got split in lots of different directions.

GG: Yeah. I forget whether the parking lobby − did they get into it?

ZS: They did. They had a bill to set up an independent parking authority that was seen by the district activists as another horrible monster that was going to come in and have the right of eminent domain, essentially, to put parking lots all over the city.

GG: One of the questions was that the parking lobby supported highways to make sure that there was a continuing stream of automobiles coming in to the city. But the parking barons, that was a side issue to the transit thing. That would be a facetious thing to say that they supported highways to get more cars in the city. Just their inclination is

conservative and pro-highway. There's a group, I don't know whether they're still around. What do they call it? The Highway Gang.

ZS: The Road Gang.

GG: The Road Gang. Have you run in to any of the Road Gang? They're a luncheon group where get together to talk about building highways and subways?

ZS: The interesting thing is some of the same engineers who were highway planners became transit planners. So they are in a very odd professional position, where actually on the technical level, these people can talk to each other.

GG: If they build a highway or build a subway, the engineers can adapt very quickly.

ZS: Right, whereas on the political level, it becomes this battle of light versus dark and all is very polarized on the political level. On the technical level it can be perfectly harmonious, so I'm dealing with lots of different cultures in that way.

GG: Right. What was happening in the city of Washington? Do you think it's a fair thing to say that this reflects what was happening nationally?

ZS: I think so. I think to some extent, it led what was happening nationally. That is a lot of these things happen in Washington, first. Basically, there's an historian, Howard Gillette. I don't know if you ran into him.

GG: Down at GW.

ZS: He was at GW. He's now at Rutgers. He had the book *Between Justice and Beauty*, arguing that urban policy − they test it out in Washington, and then it spreads to the rest of the country. I think that's certainly true of transit and highways because the highway fights here predated a lot of them in New Orleans and San Francisco and, certainly, presidential policy. Kennedy and Johnson, in particular were trying things out here.

GG: Kennedy, I'm trying to remember how he opposed the Three Sisters Bridge, or deferred it.

ZS: Exactly.

GG: I'm trying to remember whether he was involved in something else. I was thinking of the Potomac River, but he was concerned about Three Sisters Bridge.

ZS: Yeah, the interesting thing about Kennedy and Johnson is that they had both lived in Washington for so long before becoming president that, I think, they had a much more

direct grasp of the city than later presidents. I mean, Ford was here for a long time, but he lived over in Alexandria, and I don't think he liked Washington very much.

GG: Is that right?

ZS: That's my sense. I mean he was supporting Natcher on the floor of the House across party lines. That's one of the things is that the party lines do not necessarily line up in some of the freeway fight. That is you have Giaimo, a Democrat taking on another Democrat, and Broyhill was supporting the Democratic highway lobby.

GG: He supported Natcher.

ZS: Yeah. Then Nixon − well it all gets − it's not clearly part of an issue on the legislative side. Then on the judiciary, it's another matter.

GG: It's a mixed bag.

ZS: It's all mixed up. Okay, I think that's all the questions I have.

GG: If I run across any − I'll take a look and see. Probably most of the material you've found are duplicative of what I might find, but I'll see if there's anything in what I have, what I want to get rid of and send down to GW. Was there a file of press releases?

ZS: Yeah, it's largely organized by subject, so I went through every folder that said transit or transportation or highways or anything like that. There were a lot of press releases. The most eloquent stuff is often the internal documents, like memo from Gordon Hawk to you. It's not for public consumption, so he's free to say what he really thinks about what's going on in the D.C. Council or something. So those are really the most eloquent.

GG: I was just trying to remember whether the contacts with the D.C. Council. You mentioned Gil Hahn, and he was upset about the freeway.

ZS: Absolutely.

GG: I'm trying to remember. I don't think there were any proponents of the freeway on the council, were there?

ZS: No. They surrendered to Natcher, but publicly protesting. What happens, eventually they vote for the bridge, and they all get up to the microphone and say we're doing this under duress. So that's not much of a support.

GG: See, I've forgotten all of this. They took votes on these.

ZS: Yeah, and they flipped back and forth. Basically, you have Natcher over here with almost autocratic power. There's very little you could do to change Natcher's mind or to him. On the other side you have these activists. As you say, the anti-North Central

people are a bit more radical, but the anti-bridge people, a lot of them that was Cleveland Park, and Georgetown, and Covington & Burling, and all the establishment white Washington. The council was in between, just getting bounced back and forth like a ping pong ball. So it was a very stressful time for them.

GG: The highway lobby I'm sure, really worked on Natcher and probably you can see with his personality, which you understand his background and how he felt about his job in the House and I guess he was thinking about how he was going to look to posterity. This man with this great voting record, never having missed a vote. All of this meant a great deal to him, and the highway lobby or whoever was supporting him behind the scenes was just appealing to him. "Oh, Mr. Chairman, you are going to go down in history. And hang in there." Can you see this?

ZS: Oh, yeah. If he had started out the other way, he would have held on to that position. He just didn't want to change his mind. He didn't want to admit that he had been wrong about anything, and I don't think he gave a damn about what the people in Washington thought. I mean that's the thing for me looking back is it's so shocking for someone like Natcher. Well, I mean it's still today, Representative Istook. I don't understand how someone like that can believe in democracy and then just veto all these laws that the D.C. Council passes.

GG: Well, his constituents returned him every two years, so he must be doing something right, huh?

ZS: Yeah.

GG: Okay.

ZS: Wow, credit to −

GG: You're going to have a rich book.

ZS: I hope so. It's a heck of a story.

GG: You've got to weave that all together.

ZS: Yeah, and the way to get a rich book is to write 10 percent of what you know and just condense it. You have to know a lot more than you can fit into 250 pages or whatever.

GG: Exactly. How far down the road do you feel you are?

ZS: I think I'm about halfway done with the dissertation. That is, I've written drafts of four chapters, and I'm planning to write eight. Of course, just because I've written a draft doesn't mean that don't have to go back and re-write it as I get new information.

GG: You got a good adviser?

ZS: Yeah, I've got two advisers. One is Ken Jackson, who wrote a history of a suburb in America, called *Crabgrass Frontier*. The other is Betsy Blackmar who wrote *A History of Central Park*, which is, kind of like, this project in that you take one landmark and look at a whole city's development through that lens. So they've been terrific. Columbia's a great place to do urban history in general.

GG: Yeah, this is not a side issue with them. They're attentive to what you're doing.

ZS: Yeah. They're very interested in the urban part, the history of technology part, which is the other half of doing transit is a little more foreign to them and the department. Columbia doesn't really have anyone who specializes in technology, per se. I'm a little more self-taught there.

GG: That's good. It's a lot of fun. How did you ever get started on this?

ZS: Well, I grew up just a few blocks away on the other side of the line. When I was fourteen, Friendship Heights Station opened up, and suddenly I could get anywhere I wanted to. That changed my life. I'm just trying to understand that experience.

GG: That's good.

ZS: Yeah, and, of course, it's affected the neighborhood. All these buildings would go up. You know, I was able to watch that drama.

GG: Where did you live? On Wisconsin Avenue?

ZS: Yeah, 41st and Ingomar is where I grew up.

GG: Ingomar.

ZS: Is where I grew up. We lived just a few blocks away from the station.

GG: Very good. Where'd you do your undergraduate?

ZS: At Harvard.

GG: At Harvard.

ZS: Where they're very anti-rail, as you may know. The whole economic department at Harvard likes to put out papers saying how rail is a waste of money and just put buses everywhere. There was a, kind of, disconnect from what I had lived as my experience and what all these professors were saying.

GG: Maybe we'll go back to the North Central Freeway. (Laughter.) Not quite.

ZS: It's going to be interesting how it turns out. It seems like you just can't build roads anymore. As strong as the freeway protests were in the 1960s and '70s, today you can't

even replace the Wilson Bridge without years of litigation, much less build a new bridge. So it may be the only thing you can build is more Metro.

GG: Your next book can be the Woodrow Wilson Bridge fight. That's a good one.

ZS: Yeah. Some of the same, certainly Covington and Burling shows up again. Well, I'll stop the recording now.

[End of interview]